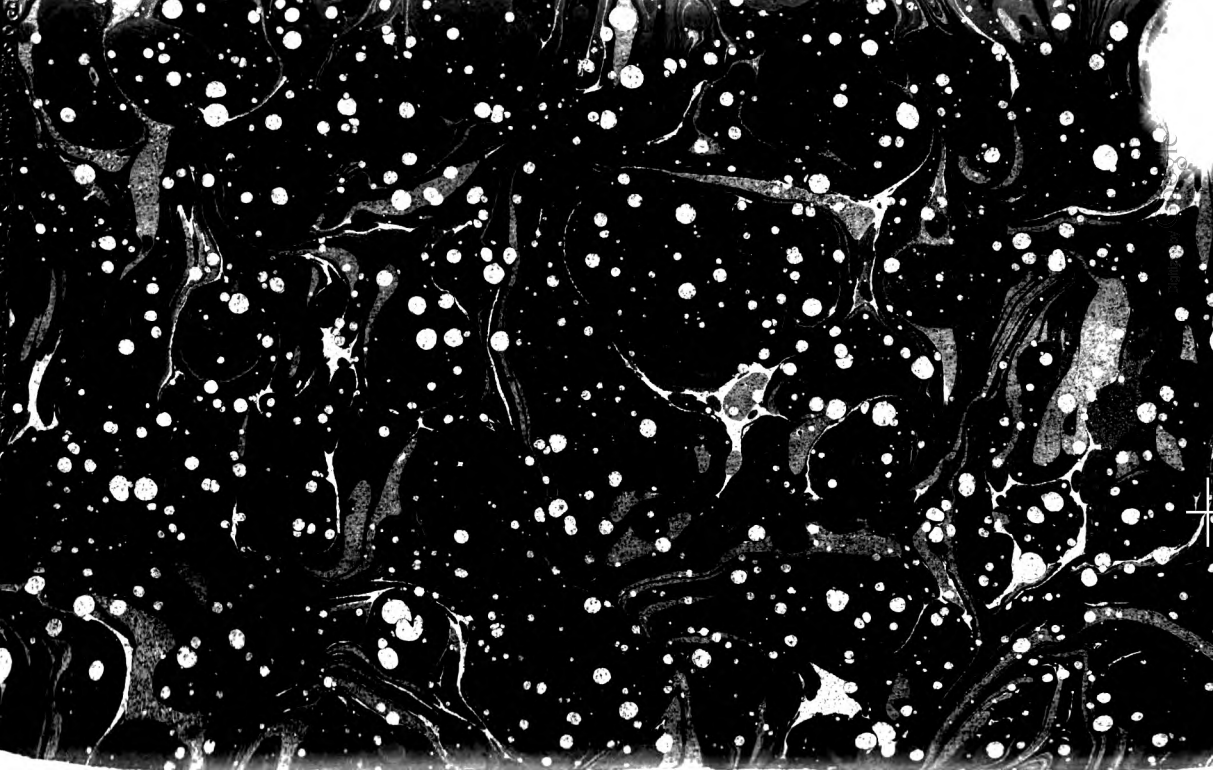
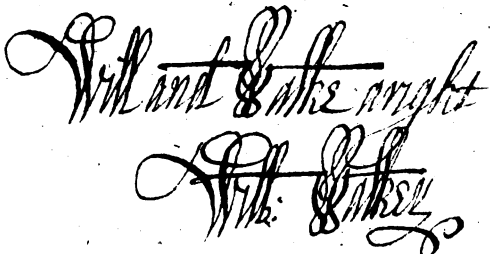


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



A Comfort given me
by my mother 1693 A M B

Digitized by Google

4474. b. 100
12 2

Digitized by Google

THE GREAT Impostor, LAID OPEN in a SERMON at GRAYES INNE, Febr. 2. 1623.

By IOS. HALL D. D.

LONDON, Printed by *F. Haviland* for *Nath. Butter*. 1623.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

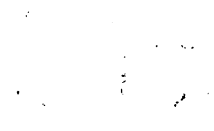
TO THE
MOST NOBLE,
AND WORTHILY
Honoured Societie
OF
GRAYES INNE:

AT WHOSE BARRE
This IMPOSTOR was
openly arraigned:

J. H.

HVMBLY DEDI-
CATES THIS PVBLIKE
LIFE OF HIS WEAKE
AND VNWORTHY
LABOVR.

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

THE GREAT IMPOSTOR,

Laid open, out of

IER. 17. 9.

The heart is deceitfull aboue all things.

I Know where I am; in one of the famous Phrontisteries of Law, and Iustice: wherfore serues Law and Iustice, but for the preuention or punish-

ment of fraud and wickednesse? Giue me leaue therefore to bring before you, Students, Masters, Fathers, Oracles of Law and Iustice, the greatest Cheator and Malefactor in the world, our owne Heart. It is a great word that I haue said, in promising to bring him before you; for this is one of the greatest aduantages of his fraud, that he cannot be seene: That as that old Iugler *Apollonius Thyaneus*, when he was brought before the Iudge, vanished out of sight; so this great Impostor, in his very presenting before you, dispeareth and is gone; yea so cunningly, that he doth it with our owne consent, and we would be loth that he could

could be seene: Therefore as an Epiphonema to this iust complaint of deceitfulnesse, is added *Who can know it?* It is easie to know that it is deceitfull, and in what it deceiues, though the deceits themselues cannot bee knowne, till too late; As wee may see the ship, and the sea, and the ship going on the sea, yet the way of a ship in the sea (as *Salomon* obserues) wee know not: God askes, and God shall answer; What he askes by *Ieremie*, he shall answer by *S. Paul*, *Who knowes the heart of man? Euen the spirit of man that is in him.* If then the heart haue but eyes enow to see it selfe by the reflection of thoughts, it is enough: Ye shall easily

1 Cor. 2. 11.

easily see and heare enough (out of the analogie and resemblance of hearts) to make you both astonished and ashamed.

The heart of man lies in a narrow roome, yet all the world cannot fill it; but that which may be said of the heart, would more than fill a world; Here is a double stile giuen it; of deceitfulnesse; of wickednesse; either of which knowes no end, whether of being, or of discourse. I spend my houre, and might doe my life, in treating of the first.

See then, I beseech you, the *Impostor*, and the *Imposture*; The Impostor himselfe, *The heart of man*; The Imposture, *Deceitfull aboue all things.*

As

As deceitfull persons are wont euer to goe vnder many names, and ambiguous, and must be expreſt with an [*alias*] ſo doth the heart of man; Neither man himſelfe, nor any part of man hath ſo many names, as the heart alone; For euery facultie that it hath, and euery action it doth, it hath a ſeuerall name: Neither is there more multiplicitie, than doubt in this name; Not ſo many termes are vſed to ſignifie the heart, as the heart ſignifies many things.

When ye heare of the heart, ye thinke ſtraight of that fleſhie part in the center of the body which liues firſt, and dies laſt; and whoſe beatings you finde

to

to keepe time all the body ouer; That is not it which is so cunning; Alas, that is a poore harmelesse peece; meerely passiue; and if it doe any thing, as the subministration of Vitall spirits, to the maintenance of the whole frame, it is but good; no, it is the spirituall part that lurkes in this flesh, which is guilty of such deceit. We must learne of witty Idolatry to distinguish betwixt the stocke and the inuisible powers that dwell in it. It is not for me to be a stickler betwixt the Hebrewes, and the Greeke Philosophers, and Physitians, in a question of naturall learning, concerning the seat of the soule; nor to insist vpon the

reasons

reasons why the spirit of God rather places all the spirituall powers in the heart, than in the braine; Doubtlesse in respect of the affections there resident, whereby all those speculatiue abilities are drawne to practise; It shall suffice vs to take things as we finde them, and to hold it for granted, that this Monosyllable (for so it is in many languages) comprises all that intellectiue and affectiue world which concerneth man; and in plaine termes to say, that when God saies *The heart is deceitfull*, he meanes, the vnderstanding, will, affections are deceitfull.

The vnderstanding is doubly deceitfull; It makes vs beleeue

it

it knowes those things which it doth not; and that it knowes not those things which it doth: As some foolish Mountebanke, that holds it a great glory to seeme to know all things; or some presuming Physitian, that thinkes it a shame not to professe skill in any state of the body, or disease; so doth our vaine understanding; therein framing it selfe according to the spirits it meets withall; if they be proud and curious, it perswades them, they know every thing; if carelesse, that they know enough.

In the first kinde; What hath not the fond heart of man dared so arrogate to it selfe? It knowes

knowes all the starres by their names; Tush, that is nothing; It knowes what the stars meane by their verie lookes, what the birds meane by their chirping, as *Apollonius* did; What the heart meanes, by the features of the face; it knowes the events of life by the lines of the hand: the secrets of Art, the secrets of Nature, the secrets of State, the secrets of others hearts, yea the secrets of God in the closet of heauen; Yea, not only what God hath done, but what he will doe: This is (*Sapiens stultitia*) a wise folly, as *Irenæus* said of his *Valentinians*; All Figure-casters, Palmesters, Physiognomers, Fortune-tellers, Alchymists, fantasticke

sticke proiectors, and all the rab-
Acts 19.19. ble of professors of those μεσίγια, not so much curious as idle Arts; haue their word giuen them by the Apostle, Deceiuing and deceiued; neither can these men make any worse fooles, than their hearts haue made themselues; and well may that Alexandrian τὸν βέβηλον ἐφ' ὑμῶν. them in both names, whether of actiue, or passiue folly. And (as it commonly falls out, that superfluous things rob the heart of necessary) in the meane while, those things which the heart may and should know, it lightly mis-knowes. As our senses are deceiued by distance, or interpositions, to thinke the stars bea-

mie

mie and sparkling, the Moone horned, the Planets equally remote, the Sunne sometimes red, pale other some: so doth also our vnderstanding erre, in misopinion of diuine things; It thinkes it knowes God, when it is but an Idoll of fancy, as *Sauls* messengers, when they came into the roome, thought they had the true *Dauid*, when it was but a Wispe; it knowes the will of God, when it is nothing but grosse mis-construction: so as the common knowledge of men, though they thinke it a Torch, is but an *Ignis Fatuus* to leade them to a ditch: How many thousand Assyrians thinke they are in the way to the Pro-

phet, when they are in the midst of *Samaria*? How many millions thinke they walke fairely on to heauen, when indeed they are in the broad way that leads to destruction? Oh poore blind Pagans, halfe-sighted Turkes, bleare-eied Iewes, blind-folded Papists, Squint-eied Schismaticks, purblind ignorants, how well doe they finde themselues pleased with their deuotion, and thinke God should bee so too; when it is nothing but a mixture of mespriſon, superstition, conceitednesse; and (according to the seldome-reuerently-vsed prouerb) whiles they thinke they haue God by the finger, they hold a deuill by the toe; and

and all this, because their heart deceiues them. If careleſſe, and loth to bee at the paines of knowing more, it perſwades them they know enough; that they cry out of more, as he did on the ointment, (*Vt quid perditio hæc?*) What needs all this waſte? and makes them as conſcionable for knowledge, as *Eſau* was for cattle, *I haue enough, my brother, keepe that thou haſt to thy ſelfe*; or as contentedly-reſolute, as the *Epicure* in the Goſpell: *Soule take thy eaſe, thou haſt knowledge enough laid vp for many yeeres.*

From whence it is, that too many reſt ſimply (yea wilfully) in their owne meaſure, not ſo much as wiſhing more skill in

Soule-matters; applauding their owne safe mediocritie; like the credulous blinde man that thought he now saw a shimmering of the Sunne-beames, when indeed his backe was towards it: Hence it is that they scoffe at the foolishnesse of preaching, scorne the forward bookishnesse of others, fearing nothing but a surfet of Manna, and hating to know more than their neighbours, than their fore-fathers; & thus are led on muffled vp in an vnfelt ignorance, to their graue, yea, (without the mercy of God) to their hell.

And as in these things there is a presumption of knowing what we doe not; so contrarily, a

a dissimulation and concealement of the knowledge of what we doe vnderstand; The heart of man is a great lier to it selfe this way; Saint *Paul* saies that of Pagans, which I may boldly say of Christians, they haue the effect of the law written in their hearts; yet many of them will not bee acknowne of one letter ingrauen there by the finger of God: Certaine common principles there are (together with this law) interlinearily written in the tables of the heart, as that we must doe as we would be done to; That there is a God; That this God is infinite in iustice and truth, and must be serued like himselfe; these they

either blot out, or lay their finger on, that they may not bee seene, purposely, that they may sinne freely; and faine would perswade themselues they neuer had any such euidence from God: so putting off the checks of conscience with bold denyalls; like the harlot of *Iericho*, (but worse than she) that hath hid the Spies, and now out-faces their entertainment: Wherein the heart doth to it selfe, that which *Nahash* the Ammonite, would haue done to Israel, put out his owne right eie, that it may not see that law whereby it might be conuinced, and finde it selfe miserable. Thus the vnderstanding of man is euery way

way deceitfull in ouerknowing, mis-knowing, dissembling; in all which it is like an euill and vnfaithfull eye, that either will be seeing by a false glasse, or a false light, or with distortion; or else wilfully closes the lids that it may not see at all; and in all this deceiues vs.

The will is no lesse cunning; which though it make faire pretences of a generall inclination to good, yet (*hîc & nunc*) in particulars, hangs towards a pleasing euill; Yea though the Vnderstanding haue sufficiently informed it of the worthinesse of good, and the turpitude of euill, yet being ouercome with the false delectablenesse of sinne, it

yeelds to a misse-assent; Reason being (as *Aquinas* speakes) either swallowed vp by some passion, or held downe by some vicious habit: It is true, still the Will followes the Reason, neither can doe otherwise; but therefore, if Reason mis-led be contrary to Reason, and a schisme arise in the soule, it must follow that the Will must needs be contrary to Will and Reason; Wherein it is like a Planet, which though it be carried about perpetually by the first mouer, yet slily creepes on his owne way, contrary to that strong circumuolution: And though the minde be sufficiently conuinced of the necessitie, or profit of a good act, yet for

for the tediousnesse annexed to it, in a dangerous spirituall accidie, it insensibly slips away from it, and is content to let it fall; As some idle, or fearfull Merchant, that could be glad to haue gold, if it would come with ease, but will not either take the paines, or hazard the aduenture to fetch it: Thus commonly the Will (in both respects) Waterman-like lookes forward, and rowes backward; and vnder good pretences doth nothing but deceiue.

The affections are as deceitfull as either; whether in misse-placing, measure, or manner.

Mis-placing: They are fiery where they should be coole; and where

where they should burne, freeze; Our heart makes vs beleeue it loues God, and giues him pledges of affection; whiles it secretly doats vpon the world; like some false strumpet, that entertaines her husband with her eyes, and in the meane time treads vpon the toe of an Adulterer vnder the board: That it loues iustice, when it is but reuenge; That it grieues for the missing of Christ, when indeed it is but for the loaues and fishes; That it feares God, when indeed it is but afraid of our owne torment; That it hates the sinne, when it is the person; That it hates the world, when it thrusts God out of doores to lodge it.

Measure:

Measure: That we loue God enough, and the world but enough, when as indeed the one loue is but as the cold fit of an ague, the other an hot; we chill in the one, no lesse than we glow in the other; when wee make God only a stale to draw on the world; That wee doe enough hate our corruptions, when (at our sharpest) we doe but gently sneape them, as *Hely* did his sons; or as some indulgent parent doth an vnthriftie darling, whom he chides, and yet feeds with the fewell of his excesse; That we haue grieued enough for our sinnes, when they haue not cost vs so much as one teare, nothing but a little fashionable winde,

winde, that neuer came further than the roots of our tongue; That we doe enough compassionate the afflictions of *Ioseph*, when we drinke wine in bowles; That wee feare God more than men, when wee are ashamed to doe that in presence of a childe, which wee care not to doe in the face of God.

Manner: That our heart loues, and hates, and feares, and ioyes, and grieues truly, when it is an hypocrite in all; That it delights constantly in God, and holy things, when it is but an *Ephraims* morning dew; That our anger is zealous, when it is but a flash of personall malice, or a superstitious furie; That we feare

feare as sonnes, when it is as cowards, or slaues; That we grieue as Gods patients, when we fret, and repine, and struggle like franticks against the hand of our Maker. Thus (to summe vp all) the heart of man is wholly set vpon cozenage; the vnderstanding ouer-knowing, mis-knowing, dissembling; The will pretending, and inclining contrarily; The affections mocking vs in the obiect, measure, manner; and in all of them the heart of man is deceitfull.

Ye haue seene the face of this Cheater; looke now at his hand; and now ye see who this Deceiuer is, see also the sleights of his deceit; and therein, the fashion; the

the subiect, the sequell of it; from whence we will descend to our Demeanure towards so dangerous an Impostor.

The fashion of his deceit is the same with our ordinary Iuglers; either cunning conueyance, or false semblance. Cunning conueyance, whether into vs, in vs, from vs.

The heart admits sinne, as Paradise did the Serpent; There it is, but by what chinkes or cranies it entered, we know not; so as we may say of sinne as the Master of the feast in the Gospell said to his slouenly guest, *Quomodo intrasti? How camest thou in hither?* Corruption doth not eat into the heart as our first Parents

rents did into the apple, so as the print of their teeth might bee seene, but as the worme eats into the core, insensibly; Neither is there lesse closenesse when it is entered; I would it were as vntrue a word, as it is an harsh one, that many a professedly-Christian heart, lodges a deuill in the blinde roomes of it, and either knowes it not, or will not be acknowne of it; euery one that harbours a willing sinne in his brest, doth so: The malicious man hath a furious deuill; the wanton an vncleane deuill, a *Beelphegor*, or a *Tammuz*; the proud man a *Lucifer*, the couetous a *Mammon*; Certainly, these foule spirits are not more truly in

in hell, than in a wicked heart; there they are, but so closely, that I know not if the heart it selfe know it; it being verified of this citadell of the heart, which was said of that vast *Ninive*, that the enemie had taken some parts of it, long ere the other knew it: What should I speake of the most common, and yet most dangerous guest, that lodges in this Inne of the heart, Infidelity? Call at the doore, and aske if such a one host not there; They within make strange of it, deny it, forsweare it; Call the officers, make priuy search, you shall hardly finde him: Like some Iesuite in a Popish dames chamber, he is so

Digitized by Google

so closely conuiued into false floores, and double walls, that his presence is not more easily knowne, than hardly conuinced, confessed. How easie is it to say, that if infidelity did not lurke in the hearts of men, they durst not doe as they doe; they could not but doe, what they doe not? Durst they sin if they were perswaded of an hell? durst they buy a minute of pleasure with euerlasting torments? Could they so sleight heauen if they beleeued it? Could they be so loth to possesse it? Could they thinke much of a little painfull goodnesse to purchase an eternity of happinesse? No, no, men, fathers, and brethren;

if the heart were not Infidell, while the face is Christian, this could not be. Neither doth the heart of man more cunningly conceiue sinne into, and in it selfe, than from it; The sin that ye saw euen now openly in the hands, is so fowlely past vnder the beard, that it is now vanished; Looke for it in his forehead, there it is not; looke for it vnder his tongue, there is none; looke for it in his conscience, ye finde nothing; and all this by the *legier de maine* of the heart: Thus *Achan* hath hid his wedge, and now he dares stand out in a lot; Thus *Salomons* Harlot hath wipt her mouth, and it was not she: Thus *Saul* will lie out his

sacrilege, vntill the very beasts out-bleat, and out-bellow him; Thus the sweater sweates, and when he hath done, sweares that hee swore not; Thus the vnclean fornicator bribes off his sinne, and his shame, and now makes challenges to the world of his honesty. It cannot be spoken, how peculiarly wittily the heart of man is this way ingenious to double it, but this willingnesse is some of the poyson that this subtile serpent infected vs with in the fatall morsell. They excuse their cunning shifts which the Scripture recordeth of their mothers (as that of Iacob is commended for more sudden pregnancie of wit) Rachel, Rebekah and

the good wife of *Baburim*; The first hiding the Teraphim with a modest feat, the second, the spies with flaxe-stalkes, and the third *Dauids* scouts with corne spred ouer the Well; but these are nothing to the deuices that nature hath wont to vse for the cloaking of sinne; *God made man vpright*, saith *Salomon*, *but he sought many inuentions*: Is *Adam* challenged for sinne? Behold all on the sudden it is passed from his hand, to Gods; *The woman thou gauest me*: Is *Saul* challenged for a couetous and disobedient remissenesse? the sinne is straight passed from the field to the Altar; *I saued the fattest for a sacrifice to the Lord thy God*; So the one be-

begins his sinne in God, and the other ends it in him: Is *Dauid* bewitched with lust to abuse the Wife; the Husband must bee sent home drunke, to hide it, or if not that, to his long home, in a pretended fauour of his valour: Is a griping Vsurer disposed to put his money together to breed a monster? hee hath a thousand quirks to cozen both law and conscience: Is a Simoniacall Patron disposed to make a good match of his peoples soules? it shall be no bargaine, but a gift: hee hath a liuing to giue, but an horse to sell. And sure I thinke in this wise age of the world, Vsurers and Simonists striue who shall finde the

vnto his way to hell. What should I speake of the secret frauds in contracts, bodies in matches, subornation of instruments, hiring of oathes, feeing of officers, equiuocations of answers, and ten thousand other reaches that the heart of man hath deuised for the conueiances of sinne; in all which it too well approues it selfe incomparably deceitfull.

The false semblance of the heroes is yet worse, for the former is more what for the smothering of euill, this is for the iustifying of euill, or the disgrace of good. In these two doth this act of falsehood chiefly consist, in making euill good, or good

euill.

cuill. For the first; The naturall man knowes well how filthy all his brood is, and therefore will not set them vpon forth; but disguised with the colours and dresses of good; so as now euery one of natures birds is a Swan; Pride is handsomnesse, desperate fury, valour; lauishnesse is noble munificence, drunkennesse ciuility, flattery complement, murderous reuenge, iustice; the Curtizan is *bona femina*, the sorceresse a wise man, the oppressor a good husband; *Absolon* will goe pay his vowes; *Herod* will worship the Babe. For the second; such is the enuy of nature, that where shee sees a better face than her

owne, she is ready to scratch it, or cast dirt in it; and therefore knowing that all vertue hath a native beauty in it, she labours to deforme it by the foulest imputations. Would she Israelites be devout? they are idle; Doth *David* daunce for joy before the Arke? he is a foole in a Morris: Doth Saint *Paul* discourse of his heavenly Vision? too much learning hath made him mad. Doe the Disciples miraculously speake all the tongues of Babel? They are full of new wine: Doe they preach Christs Kingdome? they are seditious: The resurrection? they are babblers. Is a man conscionable? he is an Hypocrite: Is he conformable? he

is

is vnconscionable: Is he plaine dealing? he is rudely vnciuill: Is he wisely insinuatiue? he is a flatterer: In short, such is the wicked craft of the heart, that it would let vs see nothing in it owne forme; but faine would shew vs euill faire, that we might be inamored of it; and vertue vgly, that we might abhorre it; and as it doth for the way, so doth it for the end; hiding from vs the glory of heauen, that is laid vp for ouer-commers; and shewing vs nothing but the pleasant closure of wickednesse; making vs beleeue that hell is a palace, and heauen a dungeon, that so we might be in loue with death; and thus both in cunning conueyance,

vnyance, and false semblance, *The heart of man is deceitfull aboue all things.*

Ye haue seene the fashion of this deceit; cast now your eies vpon the subiect: And whom doth it then deceiue? It doth deceiue others, it can deceiue it selfe, it would deceiue Sathan, yea God himselfe. Others, first: How many doe we take for honest and sound Christians, who yet are but cranck hypocrites? These Apes of Sathan haue learned to transforme themselues into Angels of light; The heart bids the eies looke vpward to heauen, when they are full of adultery; It bids the hands to raise vp themselues vpwards their

their Maker, when they are full of bloud; It bids the tongue wagge holily, when there is nothing in the bosome but Anticus profanenesse; It bids the knee do bow like a Camel, when the heart is stiffe as an Elephant; yea if need be it can bid a teare fall from the eie, or an almes or iust action fall from the hand, and all to guil the world with a good opinion; In all which, false chapmen and horse-coursers do not more ordinarily deceive their buyers in shops and fairs, than we doe one another in our conversation. Yea, so crafty is the heart that it can deceive it selfe, By over-weening his own powers, bloom as

as the proud man; by vnder-valuing his graces, as the modest; by mis-taking his estate, as the ignorant; How many hearts doe thus grossely beguile themselues? The first thinkes hee is rich, and fine, when hee is beggerly and naked; so did the Angell of Laodicea: The second is poore in his owne spirit, when he is rich of Gods spirit: The third thinkes that he is a great fauorite of heauen, when he is rather branded for an out-cast; that he is truly noble, when he is a slaue to that, which is baser than the worst of Gods creatures, sinne: Let the proud and ignorant worldling therefore know, that though others may

mocke him with applauses, yet that all the world cannot make him so much a foole as his owne heart.

Yea, so cunning is the heart, that it thinkes to goe beyond the deuill himselfe: I can (thinks it) swallow his bait, and yet auoid his hooke; I can sinne, and liue; I can repent of sinning, and defeat my punishment by repenting; I can runne vpon the score, and take vp the sweet and rich commodities of sinfull pleasure; and when I haue done, I can put my selfe vnder the protection of a Sauiour, and escape the arrest. Oh the world of soules that perish by this fraud, while by beguiling them-

themselues, whiles they would beguile the Tempter.

Yet higher: Lastly, as Satan went about to deceiue the Son of God; so this foolish comfort and client of his goes about to deceiue God himselfe: The first pairs of hearts that euer was, were thus credulous, to thinke they should now meet with a meanes of knowledge and Deifying, which God either knew not of, or grudged them, and therefore they would be stealing it out of the side of the Apple, without God, yea against him: Tush, none eye shall see us; *Ye shall know, in the most high,* saith the foolish Arabite *how, hauing we heard thee preach in our streets?*

streets? haue not we cast out Deuils in thy name? sayes the smoothing hypocrite; as if he could flatter God ouer for an admission into heauen. *Thou hast not lied to men, but to God*, saith S. Peter to *Ananias*. And perish *Ionas*, after hee had beene cooled in the belly of the Whale, and the Sea, yet will he be bearing God downe in an argument to the iustifying of his idle choler, *I doe well to be angry to the death*. But as the greatest Politicians are oft ouertaken with the grossest follies (God does proue wits a shame) the heart of man could not possibly deuise how to so much to befoole it selfe, as by this wicked presumption: *Oh ye fooles, when will ye vnderstand?* He that Psal. 94. 10, 11.

that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he vnderstand? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vanitie. A rod for the backe of fooles, yea a rod of iron for such presumptuous fooles, to crush them in peeces like a Potters vessell.

Ye haue seene the fashion and the subiect of this deceit, the sequell, or effect followes, euery way lamentable; For hence it comes to passe that many a one hath had his heart in keeping fortie, fiftie, threescore yeeres, and more, and yet is not acquainted with it; and all because this craft hath kept it at the Priscillianists locke, *Tacuimus, et ne-*

mo;

mo; It affects to be a searcher of all men, no man is allowed to come aboard of it; And if a man whether out of curiositie, or conscience, bee desirous to inquire into it (as it is a shame for a man to be a stranger at home; *Know ye not your owne hearts*, saith the Apostle;) it casts it selfe, *Proteus*-like, into so many formes, that it is very hard to apprehend it. One who is the man hath no heart, (לב אין) saith *Solomon*; Then hee hath (לב יש) an heart, and a heart, saith *David*, but one of his hearts contradicts another, and shee Psal. 12. knows not whether to believe: And what certainty, what safety can there be for a man to live

vnacquainted with himselfe? Of this vnacquaintance, secondly, arises a dangerous mes-prison of a mans selfe, in the nature and quantity of his sinne, in the quality of his repentance, in his peace and intireness with God, in his right to heauen, and (in a word) in his whole spirituall estate. Of this mes-prison, thirdly, arises a fearefull disappointment of all his hopes, and a plunging into vnauoidable torments: Wherein it is miserable to see, how cunningly the traiterous hearts of many men beare them in hand all their liues long; soothing them in all their courses, promising them successe in all their waies, securing them from

from feare of euills, assuring them of the fauour of God, and possession of heauen (as some fond Bigot would bragge of his *Bull*, or *Medall*, or *Agnus Dei*; or, as those Priests that *Gerson* * taxes, who made the people beleeue that the Masse was good for the eye-sight, for the mawe, for bodily health, and preseruation) till they come to their death-beds; But then when they come to call forth the comforts they must trust to, they finde them like to some vnfaithfull Captaine, that hath all the while in Garrison filled his purse with dead paies, and made vp the number of his companies with borrowed men; and in time of

* *Qui publicè volunt dogmatizare seu prædicare populo, quod si quis audit missam in illo die non erit cæcus, nec morietur morte subitanea, nec carebit sufficienti sustentatione, &c.*

eaſe ſhewd faire; but when hee is called forth by a ſudden alarum, bewraies his ſhame and weakneſſe, and failes his Generall when he hath moſt need of him; right thus doe the perfidious hearts of many, after all the glorious bragges of their ſecurity, on the bed of their laſt reckoning, finde nothing but a cold deſpaire, and a wofull horror of conſcience; and therefore too iuſtly may their hearts ſay to them, as the heart of *Apollodorus* the Tyran ſeemed to ſay vnto him; who dreamed one night that hee was fleaed by the Scythians, and boyled in a Caldron; and that his heart ſpake to him out of the kettle (*he ſaw*

Satan.) It is I that haue drawne thee to all this. Certainly neuer man was, or shall bee frying in hell, but cries out of his owne heart, and accuses that deceitfull peece as guilty of all his torment: For let Satan be neuer so malicious, and the world neuer so parasiticall, yet if his owne heart had beene true to him, none of these could haue hurt him. Let the rest of our enemies doe their worst, only from the cruell of our owne hearts, good Lord deliuer vs.

It were now time for our thoughts to dwell a little vpon the meditation, and deploration of our owne danger and misery, who are euery way so inuiro-

ned with subtlety. If wee looke at Satan, his old title is, *that old Serpent*; who must needs therefore now, by so long time and experience, bee both more old and more Serpent. If we looke at sinne, it is as crafty as he; *Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne*: If at our owne hearts, we heare (that which we may feele) *that the heart is deceitfull aboue all things*. Oh wretched men that we are, how are we beset with Impostors on all hands; If it were more seasonable for vs to bewaile our estate, than to seeke the redresse of it; But since it is not so much worth our labour to know how deepe the pit is, into which wee are fallen,

fallen, as how to come out of it, heare rather (I beseech you) for a conclusion, how wee may auoid the danger of the deceit of our false heart; euen iust so as we would preuent the nimble feates of some cheating Iugler; Search him, watch him, Trust him not.

Looke well into his hands, pockets, boxes, sleeues, yea, vnder his very tongue it selfe; There is no fraud so secret, but may be descried; were our hearts as crafty as the deuill himselfe, they may be found out; We are not ignorant (saith Saint *Paul*) of Satans deuices; much more then may we know our owne; Were the hearts of men (as *Salo-*

τὰ νοήματα αὐτοῦ.

mon speakes of Kings) like vnto deepe waters, they haue a bottome, and may be fathomed; Were they as darke as hell it selfe, and neuer so full of windings, and blind waies, and obscure turnings, doe but take the lanthorne of Gods law in your hand, and you shall easily finde all the falſe and foule corners of them; As *Dauid* saith of the Sun, *nothing is hid from the light thereof*; *Proue your selues*, saith the Apostle; It is hard if falſhood be so constant to it selfe that by many questions it bee not tripped: Where this duty is slackened, it is no wonder if the heart bee ouer-run with spirituall fraud; Often priuy searches scarre away vagrant,

vagrant, and disorderly persons; where no inquiry is made, is a fit harbour for them; If yee would not haue your hearts, therefore, become the lawlesse Ordinaries of vncleane spirits; search them oft; Leaue not a straw vnshaken to finde out these Labanish Teraphim that are stolne, and hid within vs: And, when wee haue searched our best, if we feare there are yet some vnknowne euills lurking within vs (as the man after Gods owne heart prayes against secret sinnes) let vs call him in that cannot be deceiued; and say to God with the Psalmist, *Search thou me ô Lord, and trie me*; Oh let vs yeeld our selues ouer to bee ran-

ransackt by that all-seeing eye, and effectuall hand of the Almighty. All our dauбing, and cogging, and packing, and shuffling lies open before him, and he only can make the heart ashamed of it selfe.

And when our hearts are once stript naked, & carefully searcht, let our eyes be euer fixedly bent vpon their conueyances, and inclinations; If we search and watch not, wee may be safe for the present, long wee cannot; for our eye is no sooner off, than the heart is busie in some practise of falshood; It is well if it forbeare whiles wee looke on, for *The thoughts of mans heart are only euill continually*; and many a heart

heart is like some bold and cunning theefe, that lookes a man in the face, and cuts his purse: But surely, if there be any guardian of the soule, it is the eye; *The wise mans eye* (saith *Solomon*) *is in his head*; doubtlesse, on purpose to looke into his heart: *My sonne, above all keepings keepe thy heart*, saith he; If we doe not dogge our hearts then in all our wayes, but suffer our selues to lose the sight of them; they run wilde, and we shall not recouer them till after many slippery tricks on their parts, and much repentance on ours. Alas, how little is this regarded in the world? wherein the most take no keepe of their soules, but suffer themselues

seluesto run after the wayes of their owne hearts, without obseruation, without controlement; What should I say of these men, but that they would faine be deceiued, and perish? For after this loose licentiousnesse (without the great mercy of God) they neuer set eye more vpon their hearts, till they see them either fearfully intoyled in the present iudgements of God, or fast chained in the pit of hell, in the torments of finall condemnation.

Thirdly, If our searches and watches should faile vs, wee are sure our distrust cannot; It is not possible our heart should deceiue vs, if we trust it not; Wee carry

carry a remedy within vs of others fraud; and why not of our owne? The Italians not vnwisely pray God (in their knowne prouerbe) to deliuer them from whom they trust; for, wee are obnoxious to those we relie vpon, but nothing can leese that which it had not; Distrust therefore can neuer be disappointed: If our hearts then shall promise vs ought (as it hath learned to profet largely, of him that said, *All these will I giue thee*) although with vowes & oathes, aske for his assurances; if he cannot fetch them from the euidences of God, trust him not. If he shall report ought to vs, aske for his witnesses; if he cannot produce

produce them from the records of God, truſt him not: If he ſhall aduiſe vs ought, aske for his warrant; if he cannot fetch it from the Oracles of God, truſt him not; And in all things ſo beare our ſelues to our heart, as thoſe that thinke they liue amongſt theeues and cozeners; euer iealouſly and ſuſpiciouſly; taking nothing of their word, ſcarce daring to truſt our owne ſenſes; making ſure worke in all matters of their tranſactions. I know I ſpeake to wiſe men, whoſe counſell is wont to be aſked, and followed, in matter of the aſſurances of eſtates; whoſe wiſdome is frequently imployed in the triall, euiction, dooming

of

of malefactors: Alas, what shall it auaile you that you can aduise for the preuention of others fraud, if in the meane time you suffer your selues to be cozened at home? What comfort can you finde in publike seruice to the state against offenders, if you should carry a fraudulent and wicked heart in your owne bosomes? There is one aboue whom wee may trust, whose word is more firme than heauen; When heauen shall passe, that shall stand; It is no trusting ought besides, any further than he giues his word for it. Mans Epithet is, *Homo mendax*, and his best part; the hearts, *deceitfull*. Alas, what shall wee thinke, or say

say of the condition of those men, which neuer follow any other aduice than what they take of their owne heart? Such are the most, that make not Gods Law of their counsell; As Esa. 57.17. *Esay* said of Israel, *Abijt vagus in viacordis sui*: Surely they are not more sure they haue an heart, than that they shall be deceiued with it, and betraied vnto death; Of them may I say, as *Salomon* doth of the wanton foole, that Pro. 7.21. followes an harlot; *Thus with her great craft she caused him to yeeld, and with her flattering lips she inticed him: And he followed her straight waies, as an Oxe that goes to the slaughter, or as a foole to the stocke for correction.* Oh then, deare

Christians,

Christians, as euer yee desire to auoid that direfull slaughter-house of hell, those wailings, and gnashings, and gnawings, and euerlasting burnings, looke carefully to your owne hearts; and what euer suggestions they shall make vnto you, trust them not, till you haue tried them by that vnfaileable rule of righteousnesse, the royall law of your Maker, which can no more deceiue you, than your hearts can free you from deceit.

Lastly, that wee may auoid not onely the euents, but the very enterprises of this deceit, let vs countermine the subtill workings of the heart. Our

Sauiour hath bidden vs be wise as Serpents; What should bee wise but the heart? And can the heart be wiser than it selfe? Can the wisdome of the heart remedie the craft of the heart? Certainly it may. There are two men in euery regenerate brest, the old and the new; And of these (as they are euer plotting against each other) wee must take the better side, and labour that the new man, by being more wise in God, may out-strip the old: And how shall that be done? If we would dispossesse the strong man that keepes the house, our Sauiour bids vs bring in a stronger than hee; and if wee would

would ouer-reach the subtiltie of the old man, yea, the old Serpent, bring in a wiser than hee, euen the Spirit of God, the God of wisdome; If wee would haue *Achitophels* wicked counsels crossed, set vp an *Hushai* within vs: The foolishnesse of God is wiser than the wisdome of men. Could wee but settle God within vs, our craftie hearts would bee out of countenance, and durst not offer to play any of their deluding tricks before him from whom nothing is hid; and if they could bee so impudently presumptuous, yet they should be so soone controlled in their first motions, that there would

bee more danger of their confusion, than of our deceit. As yee loue your selues therefore, and your owne safetie, and would bee free from the perill of this secret broaker of Satan, your owne hearts, render them obediently into the hands of God; giue him the keyes of these closets of his owne making; beseech him that hee will vouchsafe to dwell and reigne in them; so shall wee be sure that neither Satan shall deceiue them, nor they deceiue vs; but both wee and they shall be kept safe and inuiolable, and presented glorious to the appearance of our Lord IESVS CHRIST: To whom with

with the FATHER, and the HOLY GHOST, be all honour and glory, for euer and euer.

AMEN.

FINIS.

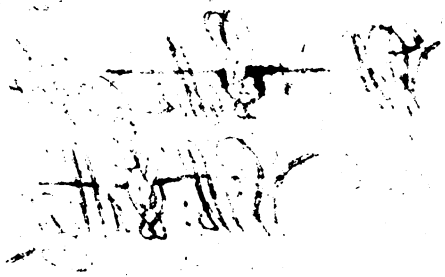
Digitized by Google

8 MR 55

Digitized by Google

Will and Jake aright

Will: Jake



Digitized by Google